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### Trouser Roles in Opera: Finding the Boy Within

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# UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

## SENIOR PROJECT - APPROVAL

Name: Kimberly Louise Burger  
College: Arts and Sciences Department: Music/College Scholars  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Stephen Dubberly  
PROJECT TITLE: Trouser Roles in Opera: Finding the Boy  
Within

I have reviewed this completed senior honors thesis with this student and certify that it is a project commensurate with honors level undergraduate research in this field.

Signed: [Signature], Faculty Mentor

Date: 5/11/98

Comments (Optional):

# Trouser Roles in Opera: Finding the Boy Within

Kimberly L. Burger  
College Scholars Project

May 5, 1999

Defense: May 11, 1999  
UT Music Hall  
Including scenes from Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*

## Prologue and Abstract

On February 23, 1999, my life as a singer-actress was turned upside-down. I was in the middle of preparation for my Senior Voice Recital, and on that day I sang a hearing of my recital for Elizabeth King Dubberly, my voice teacher; Professor Dolly Davis, the head of the voice department; and Professor Carroll Freeman, director of UT Opera. I was well prepared for my hearing. I knew my music; I had everything memorized; I knew the translations and the diction--I was ready to do it and to proceed with my recital. I did not perform my best, but I assumed it was good enough to pass.

After an unusually long period of deliberation, the hearing committee left the room, and Mrs. Dubberly pulled me aside and said four dreaded words: "We need to talk." My heart sank, as I had no idea what I was about to be told. She and I sat down, and what follows is a paraphrase of what she said:

Kim, we are giving you a conditional pass for your hearing. Here is what happened. Everything was there. You know your music and your words. Your diction is perfect. You know exactly what you are saying. You are very expressive. The problem is with the voice. We [the committee] just do not feel that your voice is where it needs to be right now. The conditional pass means that you can postpone your recital or you can continue as planned, but if we do not notice substantial improvement, you cannot expect to receive an "A" on your recital.

With those words, my world was shattered, as I had just been told that my voice wasn't good enough. After a few hours in tears, I spent some time with Professor Freeman. He and I discussed the hearing and where he thought my problems were. He proposed that my vocal technique is fairly solid, but he also believed that that somewhere I am holding back and not allowing my voice to truly connect with my emotions. Physically speaking, he and Mrs. Dubberly proposed that my singing was happening from my sternum up. There was no depth (physically or emotionally) to my singing. He suggested that, since I am an honors student and so very analytical, I am constantly editing and analyzing myself while I am singing. Professor Freeman added that, because I am so critical of myself, my singing does not have any forward momentum. For instance, while I am singing a note, I am always thinking back to previous notes and how they sounded.

He also suggested that I lack a lot of vulnerability that is required of really convincing singers. He said that I was not allowing myself to emotionally connect with a character and his/her/its emotion. My singing was all about proper technical presentation. I painted on emotion rather than truly experiencing it. My expressiveness was a convincing tool that I was using to mask my own lack of vulnerability.

I could go on and on about all of the discoveries we made about my personality and my voice. So many issues were related to self-worth and my own self-esteem. I am so thankful to be

somewhat intelligent, but, for my purposes as a vocalist, my intelligence often hinders my ability to sing freely. Therefore, I have spent this entire semester trusting my technique and focusing on singing every note with very real, genuine, and vulnerable emotion.

This discovery and process of finding more depth in my singing has spilt over into the development of my thesis. My thesis began as a historical and literary overview of trouser roles throughout the history of opera. Since my hearing, however, and through my search to find this new vulnerability in my singing, my project has evolved into a very personal study of one trouser role: Cherubino from Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. This project has been a new and difficult experience for me, because it is not a typical research paper or project. I am very good at spitting out research papers right and left. There is very little traditional historical or even musical analysis in this paper. This project has led me into deeper waters. The goal of this project is to find Cherubino within me, Kimberly Louise Burger. I want to do everything that I can to find every vulnerable aspect of this adolescent boy and allow those vulnerable characteristics to become my own. This project may never be published or displayed, but it is the evidence of my process. It is my very personal application of all that I have learned over my four years at UT. It is the process in which I enter uncharted dramatic and emotional levels. It is the process of letting go of

this twenty-two year old college woman and find somewhere within me a very real thirteen-year-old adolescent boy.

### An Overview of Trouser Roles

Although this paper is not an in-depth historical examination of trouser roles, a brief historical outline is needed to better understand the context in which trouser roles were performed. In the seventeenth century, because of papal decree, women were not allowed to perform onstage. Therefore, castrati became the premier performers in opera. Near the end of the seventeenth and during the eighteenth century, the supremacy of the castrati in opera declined and women began to take the stage. Not only did women perform; women began performing male roles. Many composers still desired the treble voice for a young boy; therefore, women began to wear pants onstage to play male characters. During that time period, however, women in society traditionally wore long dresses, and they were never to show their ankles. Therefore, the appearance of women in pants was initially difficult to accept.

For a performer, much study and discipline must go into fully preparing a role. A singer must find some way to transform him/herself into the character he/she portrays. When one walks out on stage, one must eat, drink, and breathe the character. One

genre of characters within the world of opera that presents an interesting challenge to play is that of "trouser roles." When a woman chooses to accept a trouser role, she agrees to find within herself the boy or man she must play. How does a woman in general exchange genders for a three-hour performance? How does western culture then look upon the woman who willingly chooses to play a boy? In order to investigate this topic, I took a few different steps that allowed me to understand trouser roles from many different perspectives. First, I interviewed singers Elizabeth Dubberly and Karen Nickell in order to understand what they have done to prepare the trouser roles they have played onstage. I also interviewed director Carroll Freeman about what he looks for in the initial audition to find the woman to play a male. I also spoke with him concerning how he coaches and directs a trouser role. Additionally, I viewed three operas with well-known trouser roles: Humperdink's Hansel und Gretel, Strauss' Die Fledermaus, and Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro. I studied the characters, how they move, sang, and interacted with each other. To try to understand how society reacts to trouser roles, I talked to a variety of people in and outside of the opera world to gather opinions and reactions. Through my research, I found that a successful performance of a trouser role involves no vocal alterations, thorough research and observation, and a willingness to dig deep to find the boy rather than merely putting on stereotypes. Within the context of culture, I found many mixed



reactions to the idea of a woman playing a male character. For those who understand the history and tradition of trouser roles within opera, the concept of a female wearing pants is a non-issue. For those, however, who walk into a theater with no knowledge of trouser roles, the exchange of genders is often an awkward experience. It is not understood unless the context is understood. In the world of music, context is key.

A woman who plays a trouser role should not alter the technique or any other facet of the voice production. Actually, I was surprised that the people I spoke with concerning this topic unanimously agreed that one should not alter the voice in any way. I assumed that one should try to make the voice deeper or possibly place the resonance further back in the head to give it a more stereotypically masculine sound. According to both Elizabeth Dubberly and Karen Nickell, one should trust the vocal technique to carry the role. Trouser roles are to be played by women; therefore, the qualities of a female voice are expected. If a male voice is needed, a male will play the role. As I viewed performances of various trouser roles, I found some facets of the performance of Orlofsky in Die Fledermaus rather contrived and vocally dissatisfactory. I believe that the main reason I was displeased with the performance is because the woman playing the role lowered her voice and made it very deep even when speaking. She tried to create Prince Orlofsky by assuming stereotypically male vocal characteristics. The end result was an unrealistic and

rather superficial attempt at becoming a male.

The quality of one's voice will often determine whether a woman is suited to play a trouser role. I was surprised to learn what Carroll Freeman listens for while auditioning women to play a trouser role. After really thinking through what he had to say, however, I found that his views made perfect sense. If one looks at standard trouser roles, one will realize that most characters are pre-adolescent or adolescent boys. Therefore, according to Freeman, he tends to hire women who have a nice, even, healthy vibrato. He wants a voice with a lyrical sweetness that could suggest a boy. He does not hire women who have a noticeable "wobble" in their vibrato or who have a particularly large voice. A heavy voice cannot be hired and expected to change to suit the role. The quality or color of the voice, then, is a factor that often determines whether a woman will ever have the chance to wear pants.

To successfully perform a trouser role, one must undergo a large amount of research and observation. When asked how they prepare trouser roles, singers Elizabeth Dubberly and Karen Nickell spoke first of research and observation. As with any character within any opera, one must research the time period, the social context, relationships between the characters, the libretto, and more. One must understand the context of the character and the events that occur. When preparing a trouser role, however, one must research more than just the opera. One

must research what it is like to be a boy. Karen Nickell, when developing her trouser roles, spent large amounts of time watching men and especially pre-adolescent and adolescent boys. She also spent much time watching male actors rehearse or perform, because she wanted to get to the root of how men move and act onstage. The actions of men in real life differ from the actions men engage in onstage. That statement seems insultingly simple, but it is a truth that performers often forget. Through careful and thorough research and observation, a woman will gain much insight on how to become the boy or man she is to play. Without proper research, the role will be underdeveloped and lacking depth.

Although much research and observation will add to the success of a trouser role, one may encounter problems if one applies stereotypes to one's movements rather than allowing oneself truly to become the boy. According to Freeman, an extraordinary actress and communicator is needed to play a trouser role. Since the fact that a treble voice is coming from one wearing pants and playing a boy, a suspension of disbelief exists. An actress, therefore, must adequately communicate that she is, in fact, a boy. Adequate communication, then, will come through organic facial expressions and movements rather than stereotypical movements. Freeman suggests that a performer must first know a character emotionally in order to become the character. Boys will be boys; therefore, stereotypical movements

are often true to how a boy will move. The stereotypes, however, often get in the way of the very heart of the character. Stock movements such as walking with a wide, stiff swagger overtly led by the pelvis will look so fake that the movements will only be seen as actions rather than movements of a real character.

Carroll Freeman commented on the use of stereotypes: "The danger that women might run into...the pitfall of trying to act like a boy is that very thing—trying to act like a boy." If one tries to act like a boy, one will create a very superficial facade. The character will have no depth. Karen Nickell added that she does not appreciate actresses who tend to gloss on male characteristics as something extra. She considers "how [movement and gesture] stems internally." If one emotionally relates to and connects with the boy, one will truly walk out on stage not as a girl playing a boy but as the boy himself.

Overall, I found that, from a performer's perspective, trouser roles can be some of the most exciting roles to play. For Karen Nickell, it is her favorite thing to do. It is an opportunity to do something really different and to become the farthest thing from who she originally is. In essence, it is the opportunity for a woman to exchange genders for a three hour performance. For Nickell, she also enjoys the opportunities trouser roles present to do things she would not normally get to do onstage as a woman. For instance, she, as Stéfano in Romeo et Juliet, had the opportunity to be in a fight scene. Personally, I

think that I enjoy the escape that playing a boy can provide. I enjoy the escape that I gain as I play any character. I do, however, consider playing a boy to be the furthest thing from myself. Therefore, I long for the challenge and, again, for the escape.

From a cultural perspective, the performance of trouser roles is not always as exciting for the audience as it often is for the performer. Instead of doing a survey or interviews about social reactions to trouser roles, I spoke with people who know me well and who know about my love for opera. I talked with them very casually and observed their initial reactions. As I expressed my interest in trouser roles, I realized a lot about American (probably mostly Southern) culture and how certain prejudices and uneducated assumptions about people exist even in the world of opera. Historically, trouser roles, from the beginning, caused some amount of argument and controversy. During the classical period, women in society did not wear pants. When a woman, therefore, walked onstage wearing men's pants, showing her ankles and calves, and playing a man, much confusion and dissension arose. Today, even as women in society are commonly found in pants, women playing trouser roles are not always accepted. For those who do not understand the history and the tradition of trouser roles within opera, much confusion often leads to scorn. As I have spoken to friends and family about my love for characters such as Cherubino, Orlofsky, and Hansel, they

often look at me and reply rather matter-of-factly: "Why would you want to play a boy?" It has been interesting to watch people question me as a person for wanting to play a boy. I truly believe that as such hype has arisen over sexual preference and cross dressing, people have questioned my morals or even my sanity for wanting to put on a pair of pants onstage. People have looked at me like I was truly a freak for dreaming to someday play an adolescent Count-in-training or a Russian prince.

Performances and reactions become even more heated when the audience realizes that the woman playing the boy is hitting on other women. Karen Nickell commented that she has received many negative reactions when she, as Orlofsky or another trouser role, has put her arm around a woman or even kissed a woman. Nickell added that she often tires of working with opera choruses who do not understand the context of trouser roles. She says that she often sees the fear in a young lady's eyes when she, as Orlofsky, moves to give her a kiss. The opera world, however, knows controversy will arise with these kinds of roles. Nickell has even played Orlofsky as a bisexual, and she said that the audience was shocked and confused throughout the show.

Understanding the history and core idea behind trouser roles will obviously affect one's perception of those types of roles within the context of opera. If one does not understand the tradition of women in pants in opera, one will more than likely not appreciate the performance. I now realize that the understanding of context

is a key factor in almost every facet of music, art, and life.

The transformation process for a woman to develop into a male character is, without a doubt, intricate and difficult. One must dig deep to find the boy emotionally within herself. While trying to create the boy, one cannot alter her voice. Through careful research and observation, however, one can become the boy. A character can truly live if he is organically created and not contrived by stock movements and characteristics that are glossed on. Overall, one will find the process very involved yet very rewarding, as one will always learn something about herself through it. The process will be rewarding, but the cultural reaction may not always be pleasant. Only with proper understanding of the context of trouser roles within opera can one fully appreciate the transformation process of a woman into a boy. Therefore, as always in the world of music, one must perform for the love of the art, for no one may understand the art form or the artist...especially when she comes in pants.

### Interviews

In order to obtain more concrete information concerning the emotions and feelings of an adolescent boy, I wanted to talk to someone who had experienced it. Of course, a young boy in the midst of adolescence or even just out of it will not be able to verbalize what his experience is or was like. Therefore, I did

the next best thing and interviewed three male friends in their early twenties whom I thought mature and open enough to adequately verbalize feelings and emotions they encountered throughout adolescence. The first interview was with a young man named Jimmy whom I have known for two years. He is twenty-three years old, and we are close friends. I felt certain that he would provide accurate, authentic, and vulnerable insight concerning his experience during adolescence. Interestingly, an unplanned, informal interview ensued near the close of my time with Jimmy as Mark, a mutual friend, sat down with us. Mark is a twenty-four year old married man who has one baby boy. Mark asked what we were discussing. Jimmy briefed him on our conversation, and, after Jimmy left, Mark volunteered some of his own information about his middle school experience. The next interview was with Donny, a twenty-two-year-old whom I have known for eight years. We are also very close friends, but he is more shy than Jimmy, so I did not expect a high level of vulnerability, but I knew he would share stories which would reveal a lot about his experience as an adolescent boy.

\*The question with which I began each interview was as follows:  
*Tell me what it was like to be an adolescent boy around girls.*  
From that question, a wealth of information flowed.

When I called Jimmy to ask him if he would allow me to



interview him about his experience as an adolescent boy around girls, his reaction was priceless and spoke volumes about the task I am undertaking in playing trouser roles. He said, "Kim, I'll be happy to do it, but I'll tell you...you *don't* want to go there, and once you're there, you are *never* going to be able to come back." Despite the warning, we met, and his interview opened worlds for me concerning how I approach trouser roles. The interview was truly more of an encounter of two completely different worlds. He truly smacked me across the face with truth that I think I already knew but had somehow not faced during my entire examination of playing a boy. His first sentence was this: "It's all about erections." My eyes opened wide and my hands went straight to my face to hide my blushing cheeks. Here it was--the truth I have needed since the first day I decided to find Cherubino within myself: erections. Suddenly, my task to play a boy became so much greater. Jimmy also commented on always being aware of his body and constantly wondering if anyone was watching him. He said that nervousness and paranoia were defining characteristics of his adolescent years. If the wind changed directions, he said, he would have to worry about how his body would react. When I asked him about how he felt or acted around girls, he did not have as concrete an answer. It was as if he couldn't remember quite how he reacted around girls. It seemed that he was so conscious of his body and what people were thinking about him that he didn't have time to think of how he

acted around girls. Being in very public places, namely gym class, lunch, and in the hall, were horrifying experiences everyday for Jimmy during his middle school days. Overall, Jimmy commented that the years of 13 and 14 years old for a boy are "hell." He jokingly asserted that if he died, his hell would be to live as an adolescent boy forever.

My time with Mark was short but very intriguing. Mark, it seemed, began with a moment of reflection, released a deep breath, and stated: "Those are horrible, horrible years." We did not talk for long, but I did glean two very valuable concepts. The first concept was that every boy, upon reflection, considers those years to be horrible. Second, Mark said that in almost every situation throughout the ages of 13-14, he could honestly look back and say: "What was I thinking?" He really was baffled by many of his thoughts and actions during that age. His main stories about girls concerned kissing. He recounted a time when he had his entire school bus chanting: "Kiss her! Kiss her!" as he stood at the school bus door saying farewell to his girlfriend. Encounters like that truly led Mark to wonder what in the world he was thinking as an adolescent.

Donny gave me a very interesting interview. He was, as expected, somewhat hesitant to be overly vulnerable, but his stories and expressions were priceless for my research. Donny did comment on the physical awkwardness of puberty, but he spoke of his bodily growth. He shared his feelings about waking up one day

and feeling as if he had shot up a foot overnight. He said that he went through a time when he truly wondered: "Whose body I am in?" He said that adolescence was so bizarre, because he felt so totally out of control in his very own body. His body changed so rapidly over such a short period of time that his thirteen-year-old mind and emotions did not have enough time to catch up. Therefore, the unfamiliarity and awkwardness were definitely difficult for Donny.

Donny also commented on being an adolescent boy and liking a girl who was older. He shared a story from his freshman year in high school. It was very simple. He had a crush on a young lady who was a senior. The senior girl spoke to him one day, and Donny's reaction even seven years later was very intriguing. As he was recounting his reaction, his eyes widened, and he opened his mouth as if he was searching for the words to describe his feelings. Words did not come for a few seconds, and then Donny shared his reaction: "Wow, that like made my week." It was really bizarre. This was one of those special times when I really felt like he was reliving his experience right in front of me. His facial expressions and the nervousness in the tone of his voice were so very real and so vulnerable. It was a glimpse of him returning to those days of adolescence.

A few concepts resounded as truth for all three guys. First, they all remember the ages of 13 and 14 with utter anguish. They all recounted stories from that age as if they lived a completely

different life. For all, there was a feeling of being out of control, self-conscious, and awkward. These general feelings challenge me as an actress, because I now realize that I am dealing with perhaps the most mysterious years of a boy's life. I need to find those out of control feelings. After pondering the interviews, I determined that I (as Cherubino) am in anguish at this age but not in total anguish. Most of the anguish from the interviewees came from reflecting upon those years. Cherubino, in the midst of the anguish, also enjoys every new feeling he experiences. Only when he is in his early twenties will Cherubino realize the horror of those years. For the interviewees, there was a true sense of awe with each memory. I need to find emotions and actions for Cherubino that would cause me, in eight years, to look back with the same sense of awe and will someday cause me to wonder: "what in the world I was doing or thinking?" I want to be twenty-two years old and recollect that time when I stole the Countess' ribbon and spilled my guts to Susanna about how I was in love with everyone in the palace.

One of the most interesting things I found in my interviews was that none of the men could put into words what they really thought about or what their emotions were around girls. They all said that, to some extent, they were so clouded with feelings such as awkwardness or self-consciousness that they never thought much about how to act around girls. Their inability to verbalize what they thought about or felt when they were around girls

actually provided a wealth of information. I assumed that I (as Cherubino) would need to consider what exactly I was thinking about while singing to Susanna and/or the Countess. I realize now that I will need to think more about being consumed by my own uncontrollable body and emotions. My emotions need to be so strong that, in the end, I won't remember a thing that I have said or how I have felt. This realization has completely opened a new door concerning my approach to Cherubino.

From Jimmy's interview I am most challenged to find the emotions and paranoia of the constant threat of erection. I have absolutely no experience with this aspect of being a boy in adolescence. Again, this phenomenon draws a lot from the fact that he felt as if he had no control over his body or his emotions. I want to know the fear of having no control over my body or emotions. As a girl, I can relate to these out of control and embarrassing feelings, but I seldom had to fear the threat of an outward sign (such as an erection) of my inward turmoil. I will, however, be able to draw from my own adolescent feelings of arousal and the accompanying paranoia. To be very specific, I remember instances in which I was aroused by a movie and wondered if my friends and/or parents could tell. I think my own adolescent paranoia would have been similar to that of a young boy. I, as a girl, did not have to worry about physically showing evidence of my state of arousal.

Donny provided much inspiration for how to find Cherubino

physically. I had forgotten how quickly my friends in middle school grew physically. I have never thought about how awkward it must be to adjust to a body that is growing and changing so rapidly. Actually, girls' bodies change rapidly, but the awkwardness is less severe compared to the experience of the adolescent male. I need to find the use of my arms and legs as if they are moving in ways over which I have no control. Donny laughed as he remembered his flailing long arms that grew like a limb overnight. I need to find the awkwardness not just in my emotions but also in my physical presentation. Cherubino feels everything but, in a way, wonders whose body he is in and where these feelings are coming from. I want my feelings and physical movements to appear as if they have hit me overnight.

Donny's story about the senior girl talking to him gave me amazing insight on how Cherubino might feel around Susanna and especially the Countess. As mentioned before, Donny's facial expressions said much more than his words. He was completely speechless while remembering his encounter with that senior woman. This portion of my interview with Donny sent me to Cherubino's scene in the Countess' chamber. I want to have that same sense of speechlessness and awe so that, when I leave, I will be able to say as Donny did: "Wow, that like made my week." The most ironic thing that I am realizing is that my experience in her bedroom chamber will have made my week not because I was able to perform my canzonetta for her. It will make my week

because I was in her presence and she paid attention to me. I will probably not remember a word that I said or how my song sounded. I will remember the exhilaration of being in the presence of her with whom I have been enamoured for so long. As a singer, I, of course, want to sing well, but I am learning more and more how much it is not about the voice. For Cherubino, it is about experiencing every emotion to the fullest.

### Observations

On Friday, April 9, 1999, I spent four hours at Vine Middle School in Knoxville, Tennessee, observing Ms. Jill Hobby's music classes. I observed a keyboarding class of seven students, a general music class of six students, and a show choir rehearsal of fifteen students. Keyboarding and show choir contained an even number of boys and girls, but the general music class contained only one boy and five girls. All of these classes were conducted with the children sitting in chairs (choir style) without desks.

As a visitor in the class, I attempted to remain as casual and as natural as possible in order to make the students feel comfortable around me. Realistically, I knew that I was a new face and that not all of the reactions I observed would be completely natural. I was uninvolved in the keyboarding and general music class, but I participated in the show choir rehearsal after sitting and observing for fifteen minutes. My

goal in these observations was twofold. First, I wanted simply to be reminded of what it was like to be 12 or 13 years old. Second, I wanted to observe the physical and social mannerisms of the boys in these classes.

Keyboarding class was perhaps the most interesting, because it was a class in which the children were performing for each other in a discipline with which they were not comfortable. My first observation was that the boys sat on one side of the room while the girls occupied the other side. There did not seem to be awkwardness *between* the boys and the girls. The awkwardness, however, existed *within* the boys apart from any apparent surrounding circumstance. As the boys sat in class, they all were crouched over in what looked like a very uncomfortable position. Their shoulders pushed forward, and they bent at the waist over their books with their spines dramatically curved. Throughout the class, they kept their faces down looking in their books. Even when called upon by the teacher, they looked up maybe for two seconds, but then their eyes would return to the pages. Overall, the boys were timid, tense, and awkward.

After the class moved from the lecture room to the keyboard lab for further practice, a student named Bailey entered. Ms. Hobby introduced me to Bailey and told me that he is an advanced piano student and is their accompanist for the show choir. He is twelve years old. When I saw Bailey, I was transported nine years back to the halls of my middle school. He walked into the



classroom with a bookbag that was almost bigger than he was. He was wearing a plain t-shirt, long shorts, and tall socks. Bailey's most prominent features were his arms and legs. They were long and seemed almost too long to fit the rest of his body. His arms were flailing as if they were unattached. There seemed to be a lack of control in his arms. It was interesting to see incarnated the characteristics of which I was told in my interviews. Bailey, similar to the other boys, held his body in a crouched position even when walking. His hands were very large as well, and his fingers were equally as long. I was amazed that he could play the piano as well as he did. Overall, Bailey helped me reflect on my own years of middle school and helped me remember the disproportionate bodies of my male friends. He also gave me a perfect picture of the flailing, out of control physicalities of boys at this age. I saw Bailey as one who, when he is twenty, will reflect upon this time in his life and wonder whose body he was in.

One last boy in the keyboarding class caught my attention when he was playing the piano for the entire class. He struggled through the piece he played, and, as Ms. Hobby was helping him, she made the comment: "Your hands are just so big." That comment reminded me of the lack of coordination that boys so often have at this age. His lack of coordination is caused mainly because his body is growing faster than his mind can adjust. The interesting part of his interaction with Ms. Hobby was that he

did not get overly frustrated. It seemed as if he merely accepted his lack of coordination.

During the general music class, I observed one boy while he danced to the music Ms. Hobby played for the class.

Dancing/movement, according to Ms. Hobby, is an integral part of their curriculum. As this boy danced, it seemed that he had a sense of rhythm, but his arms swayed in an uncontrollable fashion. His arms did not flail as much as those of Bailey, but they were very loose. It was intriguing to watch, because his body moved in rhythm, but his arms did not follow the same rhythmic motion. Even his body was relaxed, but it did not seem that the relaxation was a choice. The looseness seemed to be a result of the fact that he did not have control over his limbs.

The show choir was interesting, but the most interesting interactions occurred after the rehearsal ended. The children were waiting for school to be dismissed for the day, and the boys were simply running up to each other and colliding over and over. There did not seem to be a point to their horseplay. They were not playing a game. It was so fun to see how they did not care one bit about what they were doing. They were simply exerting pent-up energy.

Overall, these observations were key in achieving my goals of rekindling memories of my own middle school experience and observing how adolescent boys act and interact in real life situations. I was intrigued to observe many characteristics that

had been described in the interviews. The observations allowed me to see real examples of boys enduring puberty just like Cherubino.

### Cherubino

Cherubino is the adolescent page of Count Almaviva in W.A. Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. He experiences all of the feelings and emotions of an adolescent boy but must remain in the proper attitude of the court. He is hopelessly in love with every woman in the palace, but he is especially enamoured with the Countess. To Cherubino, she is the ultimate conquest. Many sources introduce Cherubino as a Don Giovanni in training, but there is opinion that he is too young and innocent in his schoolboy crushes to truly be seen as a Giovanni. Overall, he is overwhelmed by his own lovesickness and by his own plight with adolescence.

Donald Grout, in his book *A Short History of Opera*, introduces Mozart's characters in *Le Nozze di Figaro* poignantly: "No characters in any opera give more strongly the impression of being real persons than do Figaro and Susanna...Cherubino, and even the lesser figures of this score" (329). Cherubino's foundation as a character lies in the very fact that he is a real person and not a stock character or stereotype. Grout continues his examination of Mozart's characters by characterizing them as

...human beings, each feeling, speaking, and behaving under certain vital circumstances very much as any other human being of like disposition would under similar conditions, whether in the eighteenth century or the twentieth. (329-330)

The feelings of adolescent boys of today are the very same that Cherubino feels. The context of his environment may be different from that of the twentieth century, but the emotions and physical changes are the same. Mozart ensured that Cherubino would be a very real and vulnerable young page with very real and genuine emotions, feelings and experiences.

Although Cherubino's feelings and experiences are genuine, there seems to be something very universal about them. Within Cherubino lies a lovestruck and innocent young teen who is bewildered by the process of puberty and adolescence. C.S. Lewis in *The Allegory of Love* characterizes Cherubino as "that boy-like blending...of innocence and sensuousness which could make us believe for a moment that paradise had never been lost" (135). There is a mysterious collision within Cherubino in which one can simultaneously find intense lust interacting with endearing innocence. Beaumarchais comments on his own Chérubin: "The basis of his character is an undefined and restless desire" (Schmidgall 99). Cherubino is constantly tormented by the pangs of love and adolescence. He never rests or escapes from the incessant throbbing of his heart or his hormones. He is a boy being controlled by an unknown force. He is an inexperienced adolescent

experiencing feelings of love and infatuation for the first time. Hofmannsthal, while describing characteristics of Octavian from Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*, refers to Beaumarchais' Chérubin:

This love-yearning figure, the personification of young men, who awaken to love, not coolly calculating, not knowledgeable through experience, not saturated, but unexperienced. A singer becomes a loving being. Her body, disguised in the clothes of a man, possesses a concealed but strong allurements. (Pörnbacher 63)

The youthful passions of Cherubino are strong, but along with those passions remains an inexperienced adolescent who is equally as frightened by a lady as he is set on fire. This complex paradox is a challenge for any actress, but the complexity leads to an amazing opportunity for thorough character development.

Cherubino, as with all adolescent boys, endures the physical changes that accompany puberty. Therefore he, in the presence of Susanna, the Countess, and all the other women of the palace, must deal with many forms of physical, mental, and emotional awkwardness. Along with this awkwardness, however, comes the subtle eroticism of a boy overcome by fresh love and passion. Singer Frederica Von Stade, who is one of the foremost Cherubino performers of the twentieth century and perhaps of all time, comments on Cherubino's struggle with passion:

One of the things I love about [Cherubino] is the way he shows us the conflict between following our desires and doing what is expected of us...It's such a joy to play someone who just won't behave, who gets into constant trouble because he simply follows his

instincts (257).

There is something deeply attractive about a youth driven by uncontrolled emotion. Søren Kierkegaard, in his discussion of eroticism in music, returns to the comparison of Cherubino to Don Giovanni (Kierkegaard 60). Brigid Brophy, however, asserts his own opinion as he refers to the opinion of Kierkegaard:

Søren Kierkegaard made a charming remark when he described Cherubino as Don Giovanni [Don Juan] as a boy: but the truth about Cherubino, who lives on the perpetual point of being ravished, is that he is as much seduced as seducer. He has none of Don Giovanni's active and deliberate character, and not a touch of Don Giovanni's brazenness. Intellectual self-justification in the enlightenment manner would never enter his head. He is himself the victim of the influence which through him disturbs everyone else. He is the adolescent whose sexual tension has involuntarily attracted a poltergeist into the Almoviva household. (Brophy, 105)

Perhaps this sexual tension is what leads to the Countess' affair with Cherubino in the third play of Beaumarchais' trilogy, *La mère coupable*. Again, there is something magnetic about sensual yet innocent youth. Cherubino is the perfect embodiment of the paradox.

In conclusion, Cherubino, as a literary and operatic character, is a perfect example of adolescent passion and desire. Along with his passion comes the awkwardness of youth and the uncontrollable feelings of his heart or body. Every frantic, lovestruck emotion can be found in just one glance at Cherubino. The complexity is maddening to him yet quite endearing and often

erotic to an audience (including the Countess). George R. Marek, in his book *Opera as Theater*, best encapsulates the spirit of Cherubino: "The figure has become one of transcendental beauty, the very posture of youth, the delicate embodiment of the state of being in love with love" (11). Adolescence is a difficult stage for all, and Cherubino serves as a universal picture of that strange yet blissful period of life.

### Cherubino's Music

Although this paper will not provide an in-depth analysis of Cherubino's music, an overview of the music is necessary to understand more of Cherubino's character. Cherubino's first aria, "Non so più," is a perfect musical and poetic declamation of Cherubino's character. During the preceding recitative, Cherubino tells Susanna that he is jealous of her, because she gets to dress the Countess everyday. Then Cherubino takes one of the Countess' ribbons from Susanna in exchange for a "canzonetta" that he has written (which he later sings as "Voi, che sapete"). After the recitative, Cherubino immediately begins his aria. It is very interesting how the distinction between recitative and aria is blurred. There is no elaborate orchestral introduction. The aria is simply a verbal declamation of all of Cherubino's feelings. He is breathless and relentless in his expression. The accompaniment beneath his vocal line is agitated similar to his body and emotions. The repetition of phrases such as "ogni donna"

(every woman) and "un desio" (a desire) are poignant examples of Cherubino's out of control hormones and emotions. He cannot keep his thoughts straight and becomes fixated on the objects of his affection (the women) and on the heart of his emotion (his desire). At the end of the aria, he stops abruptly and reenters the recitative style to express that he will talk to himself if no one will listen to him. Similar to the personality of an adolescent, lovestruck boy, this aria is relentless and, for a singer, never seems to end. This endless feeling is perfect for Cherubino, because his feelings constantly and simultaneously torment and exhilarate him.

Cherubino's second aria, "Voi, che sapete," is very different from "Non so più," because, instead of freely emoting, he is performing his canzonetta for the Countess. Luckily, Cherubino is afforded a long orchestral introduction for his "performance" in which he can settle his adolescent emotions. The aria begins with crisp melodies, harmonies and accompaniment which suggest the courtliness of Cherubino's status as a page, and it also is an indication that Cherubino has been able to pull himself together for his "performance." As one examines this aria, however, one will realize that Cherubino loses himself in his emotions and feelings. The vocal line of the aria evolves from its initial rhythmic, orderly pattern to a less systematic vocal line. Even in examining what Cherubino is saying, one will see that his initial plea is for the ladies to see if what he is



feeling is truly love. That initial plea, however, of "Voi, che sapete" (You who know) turns into Cherubino making more personal reflections such as "Quello ch'io provo" (That which I feel), and he finally loses his composure in a hormonal frenzy during lines such as "Sospiro e gemo" (I sigh and I moan). In the end, he regains his composure and returns to the original melody and stately rhythms. His raging emotions and hormones distract his "performance". One can easily understand why Cherubino cannot hold his composure. He is in the presence of the woman he has admired above all: the Countess. Not only is he in her presence-- he is in her bedroom which is her most personal and intimate space. This aria is Cherubino's chance to impress the object of his affection. The impression that he makes, however, is one of unquenchable impulse and passion.

As I worked on "Voi, che sapete" I learned how truly difficult yet how fun it is to play a boy. The entire process made me realize much about how I perform naturally as a woman. A high level of control is required for a woman to adequately play a man. I constantly had to restrain many hand and even finger gestures that I often used to make my performance a bit more flowery. I even had to control how I sang parts of the aria. Vocally, I was not changing my technique. I did, however, tend to slur some of the runs and intervals. Freeman, during a coaching, constantly reminded me of the lightness and clarity of an adolescent boy's voice. Therefore, my rhythms and intervals had

to be very crisp. What I found most interesting, however, was that I was never coached or directed on how to make specific boyish moves. Freeman and I poured the majority of our time into getting to know Cherubino emotionally. As I thought more about Cherubino and where he was in life, I better understood how to perform the aria. His hormones are raging, and he simply does not know what to think about all of the physical and emotional changes that he is experiencing. In light of those facts plus the fact that he is singing this aria for the Countess and Susanna, I was able to experience the nervousness and excitement that Cherubino must have felt while singing this aria. My performance of this aria (and all of Cherubino's music) is founded through the understanding of Cherubino and then allowing the movement and expression to come from an overflow of that understanding.

#### Kim as Cherubino

Before the completion of this project, I need to examine how I, as Kim, become Cherubino. I have proposed many emotional and physical connections that I can make in order to understand him better. I have also technically looked at the words and music that he says/sings. Before I go any further, however, I need to look at what will potentially hinder my portrayal of this young page.

Mainly, I will have to work through walls of protection that

I often put up to avoid embarrassment and failure. I need to find the vulnerability within myself to play this boy. I need to allow myself to let go. Honestly and accurately playing an adolescent boy is not comfortable for me. I am requiring myself to enter the state of paranoia and even arousal that Cherubino experiences. I want to feel the real emotions that Cherubino feels. I don't want simply to paint on stereotypes. That would be very easy for me to do. Although I cannot experience an erection, I can draw from past feelings of arousal. Even now, this is uncomfortable for me to write about, and I am amazed, anxious, and excited that I will experience it in front of an audience. I am working for the day when I can perform Cherubino so that an audience and my "Susanna" and "Countess" really believe that I am experiencing raging hormones and the accompanying paranoia.

Throughout all of his scenes, Cherubino verbalizes, as well as he can, exactly what he is feeling. I want to feel everything that I express as Cherubino. This goal is going to require me to experiment in silliness and vulnerability. From what I understand, it is often embarrassing to be an adolescent male. It is awkward and uncomfortable. I need to allow myself to feel and experience that awkwardness and embarrassment. For me, a girl who likes to have all her ducks in a row and impress those around her, this level of vulnerability is a huge challenge. Basically, I need to expose myself in ways I never have before. I need to be embarrassed and awkward. I need to be highly unimpressive and,

most of all, horny. For a girl who is fairly modest and somewhat "proper," this challenge is one I look forward to tackling.

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## Appendix

The following pages include the first methodical steps that are taken to prepare Cherubino's arias. A word-by-word translation is included along with a phonetic transcription of the arias (using the International Phonetic Alphabet). This method is essential in a singer's initial understanding of what the character is saying and how to say it accurately.



# Non so più cosa son

from  
LE NOZZE DI FIGARO

Allegro vivace

Not I know more what I am what I do

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

CHERUBINO:

Now of

Non so più co - sa son, co - sa fac - cio; or di  
non sop: pju ko za son ko sa fat tfo or di

fire now I am of ice.

Each woman to change of color

fo - co, o - ra so - no di ghiac - cio. (me) O - gni don - na can - giar di co -  
fo ko ra so no di giac tfo o ni don: na kan djar di ko

each woman me makes palpitare

each

lo - re, (Sus.) o - gni don - na mi fa pal - pi - tar, (Ow) o - gni  
lo re o ni don: na mi fa pal pi tar o ni

woman me makes palpitate each woman me

don - na mi - fa pal - pi - tar, (I can't help it) o - gni don - na mi -  
 don: na mi fap: pal pi tar o ni don: na mi f:

makes palpitate Only at the names of love of de-

fa pal - pi - tar. So - lo ai no - mi d'a-mor, di di -  
 fap: pal pi tar So lo ai no mi da mor did: di

light me itself disturbs me itself alters the breast

let - to, mi si tur - ba, mi s'al - te-ra il pet - to,  
 let: to mis: si tur ba mis: sal te ra: il pet: to

and to speak me strains of love

e a par - la - re mi - sfor - za d'a - mo - re  
 e a par la re mis: sfor tsa da mo re

a desire a desire that I not

un de - si - o, un de - si - o ch'io non  
un de zi: o un de zi: o ki: o nom

can explain a desire a de-

pos - so spie - gar, un de - si - o, un de -  
pos: so spje gar un de zi: o un de

Sire that I not can explain Not I know

si - o ch'io non pos - so spie - gar. Non so  
zi: o ki: o nom pos: so spje gar non sop:

more what I am what I do Now I fire now I am of

piu co - sa son, co - sa fac - cio; or di fo - co, o - ra so - no di  
pju

ice. Each woman to change of color each

ghiac - cio. O - gni don - na can - giar di co - lo - re, o - gni

woman me makes palpitate each woman me

don - na mi fa pal - pi - tar, o - gni don - na mi

makes palpitate each woman me makes palpitate

fa pal - pi - tar, o - gni don - na mi fa pal - pi -

I speak of love while

tar. Par - lo d'a-mor ve -  
par lo da mor ve

waking I speak of love while

glian - do, par - lo d'a-mor so -  
 ʎan do par lo da mor so

dreaming to the water to the shadow to the mountains to the flowers to the grass to

gnan - do, all' ac - qua, all' om - bra, ai mon - ti, ai fio - ri, all' er - be, ai  
 nan do al: lak: kwal: lom bra:i mon ti a:if: fjo ri al: ler be a:if:

the fountains to the echo to the air to the winds which the sound of (futile) useless

fon - ti, all' e - co, all' a - ria, ai ven - ti, che il suon de' va - ni ac -  
 fon ti al: le ko al: la rja:iv: ven ti ke:il swon de va ni at:

words carry away with them carry

cen - ti, por - ta - no via con se, por - ta - no  
 tʃen ti par ta no vi:a kon se par ta no

cresc. f colla voce p

away with them

I speak of love while waking

via con se. Par-lo d'a-mor ve-glian-do,  
vi:a kon se par lo da mor ve lan do

I speak of love while dreaming

to the water to the shadow

par-lo d'a-mor so-gnan-do, all' ac-qua, all' om-bra,  
par lo da mor so nan do al: lek: kwal: lom bra

to the mountains to the flowers

to the grass

to the fountains

to the

ai mon-ti, ai fio-ri, all' er-be, ai fon-ti, all'  
a:im: mon ti:a:if: fio ri al: ler be a:if: fon ti al:

echo

to the air

to the winds

which the sound of the useless words

e-co, all'a-ria, ai, ven-ti, che il suon de' va-ni ac-cen-ti,  
koal: la rja:iv: ven ti keil swan de va ni at: t'en ti

*cresc.* *f* *p* *cresc.*

carry away with them carry away with

por - ta - no via con se, — por - ta - no via con  
 par ta no via kon se par ta no via kon

*f* *colla voce* *p*

them And if not I have (one) who me hears And

*Adagio*

se. — E se non ho chi m'o - da, e  
 se es: se non o kim: mo da es:

if not I have (one) who me hears I speak of love with

*Tempo I*

se non ho chi m'o - da, par - lo d'a-mor con  
 se non o kim: mo da par lo da mor kom:

*cresc.*

myself with myself I speak of love with myself

me, — con me, — par - lo d'a-mor con me.  
 me kom: me par lo da mor com me

*f* *p* *f*

\*Appoggiaturas are optional here.

cor - tongue  
donne vedete - up↑

literal translation  
double consonants  
solo class two weeks  
Oct. 8


# Voi, che sapete

from  
LE NOZZE DI FIGARO

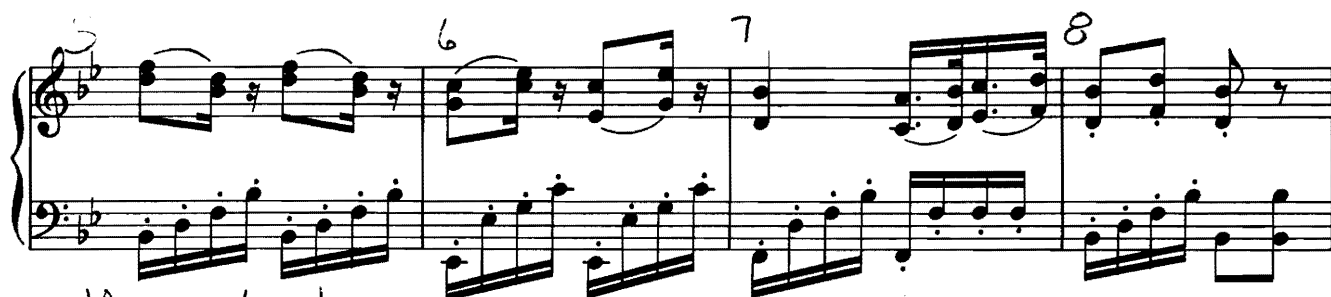
work on singable translation

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1 Andante con moto 2 3 4



5 6 7 8



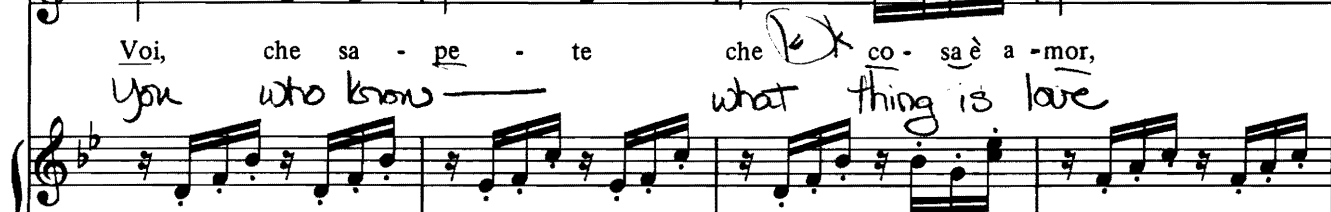
9 La — dies you know — ~~like~~ if this is love

CHERUBINO:

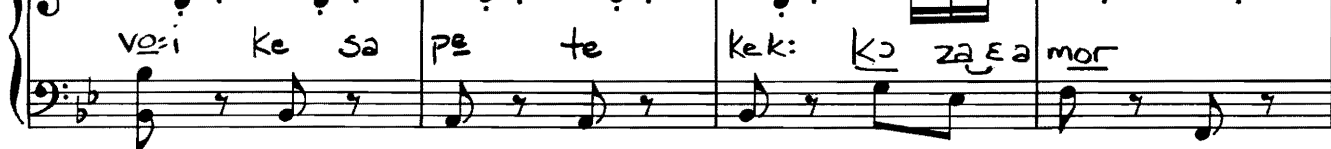


Voi, che sa - pe - te che ~~like~~ co - sa è a - mor,

You who know — what thing is love

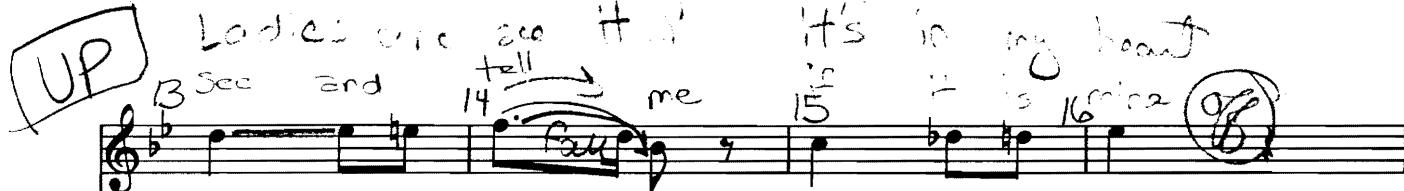


voi ke sa pe te kek: ko za a mor



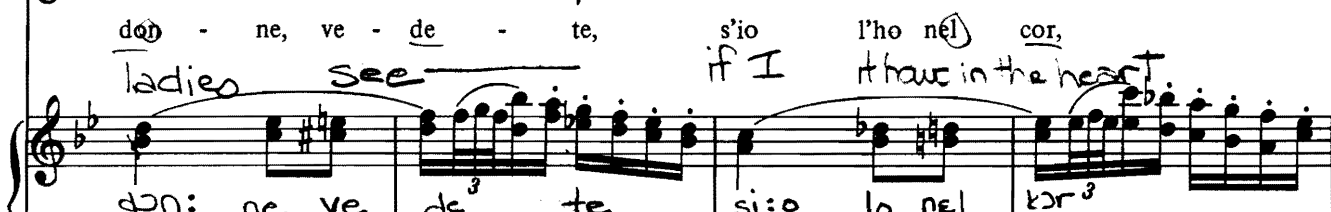
**UP** Ladies are see if it's in my heart

13 See and 14 tell me 15 it is 16 nice ~~of~~



don - ne, ve - de - te, s'io l'ho nel cor,

ladies see if I it has in the heart



don: ne ve de te si: o lo nel kor





17 See and 18 tell me 19 if it is 20 mine

don - ne, ve - de - te, — s'io l'ho nel cor.  
ladies see if I have in the heart

don: ne ve: de te si: o lo nel kor

*clear*

21 This 22 that I'm feeling 23 I will re - 24 peat

Quel - lo ch'io *(pro open)* vo, ah vi - ri - di - rò;  
That which I experience to you I will repeat

kwel - lo kio pro vo vi ri di ro

25 It's for me 26 different 27 To know 28 Get I can't

è per me nuo - vo, ca - pi non so.  
It is for me new to understand not I know

Ep: per me nuo vo ka pir nol so

29 Feel an 30 affection 31 full 32 of desire

Sen - to un af - fet - to pien di de - sir,  
I feel an emotion full of desire

Sen teu naf: fet: to Pien did: de zir

33 Now it is pleasure 34 now it is pain 35 now it is pain

ch'o - ra è di - let to, ch'o - ra è nan - ti.

which now is delight which now is suffering

ko ra è di let: to ko ra em: mer tir

37 Free zing and 38 then feel 39 soul burning 40 up

Ge - loe poi sen - to l'al - ma av - vam - par,

I freeze and then I feel the soul blazing

dze loe poi sen to l'al mav: vam par

41 then in a 42 moment 43 turning to 44 freeze

e - in iux mo - men - to tot - no a ge - lar.

and in a moment I return to freezing

e in um: mo men to tot nwa dze lar

45 Seek - ing a 46 treasure 47 dist - ant from 48 me

Ri - cer co um be - ne fuo - ri di me

I seek a treasure out of me

ri tser kum be ne fuo ri di: me

49 know not who it is nor what it is I mean and  
 non so chi ti tie - ne, non so cos' - è. So spi-ro e  
 not I know who it holds I know thing I sigh and  
 non so kil tie ne non so ko ze so spi ro e

53 quiver out of control shaking and  
 sighing without control currently cast Trembling know not  
 ge - mo sen - za vo - ler; pal - pi-toe tre - mo sen - za sa -  
 I moan without to want I shake and I tremble without to  
 dze mo sen tsa vo ler fp pal pi tue tre mo sen tsa sa

56 why 57 midnight or day and yet it pleases  
 Can find no respite in day or in night yet I still love  
 per. Non tro-vo pa - ce not te nē dī, ma pur mi pia - ce  
 know - Not I find peace night not day but yet me if pleases  
 per mfp non tro vo pa tfe nē te ne di map pur mi: pia tfe

lan - guish 61 62 63  
 languish thus 50  
 lan - guir co - si Voi, che sa - pe - te  
 languish thus 51 You who know  
 lan guir ko 52

64 65 66 67

che co - sa è a - mor, don - ne, ve - de - te,

What thing is love ladies see

68 69 70 71

s'io l'ho nel cor, don - ne, ve - de - te, —

If I it have in the heart ladies see

72 73 74 75

s'io l'ho nel cor, don - ne, ve - de - te, —

If I it have in the heart ladies see

76 77 78 79

s'io l'ho nel cor, don - ne, ve - de - te, —

If I it have in the heart ladies see

The following excerpts from the score of *Le Nozze di Figaro* contain Cherubino's two arias: "Non so più" and "Voi, che sapete." I chose a non-traditional way to analyze these arias. There are no roman numerals or traditional forms of musical analysis included. This analysis is an attempt to find the dramatic meaning of these two arias. As with any opera, the character speaks, but his words take the form of music. Therefore, both the vocal and accompanying lines are the character's thoughts and emotions. The music serves a greater purpose than simply to be beautiful. The music is evidence of the characters thoughts and motives. This analysis is my proposal of what emotions create Cherubino's music.

## No. 6. Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio

I can't give you a good explanation

## Aria

Cherubino

Allegro vivace

Confusion/Lack of control  
Cherubino

Non so più co-sa son, co-sa fac-cio, or di  
I can't give you a good ex-pla-na-tion for this

*Cherubino's internal/hormonal agitation*

*p* *f* *p*

fo-co, o-ra so-no di ghiac-cio, ① o-gni don-na can-giar di co-  
new and con-fus-ing sen-sa-tion. Ev-ry la-dy I see makes me

*f* *p*

lo-re, ② o-gni don-na mi fa pal-pi-tar, ③ o-gni  
trem-ble, makes me trem-ble with plea-sure and pain, makes me

*mf*

don - na mi fa pal - pi - tar, ④ o - gni don - na mi  
trem - ble with plea - sure and pain, makes me trem - ble with

fa pal - pi - tar So - lo ai no - mi d'a-mor, di di -  
plea - sure and pain When of love there is mere - ly a

*Reflection on his love*

[ a bit more lyric - a bit more control for Cher. ]

let - to, mi si tur - ba, mi s'al - te-ra il pet - to,  
men - tion, I am spell-bound and rapt with at - ten - tion.

e a par - la - re mi sfor - za d'a - mo - re  
I weave ro - manc - es and day-dreams to - geth - er,

fixation  
on  
insatiable  
desire

① un de - si - o,  
filled with long-ing,

② un de - si - o ch'io non  
filled with long-ing I

[bass line rising as Cherubino's  
hormones rising]

pos - so spie - gar, ③ un de - si - o,  
can - not ex - plain, filled with long-ing, un de -  
filled with

Back to original,  
uncontrollable  
agitation

④ si - o ch'io non pos - so spie - gar. but Non so  
long - ing I can - not ex - plain. different? If I

più co - sa son, co - sa fac - cio, or di fo - co, o - ra so - no di  
knew what it is I'd con - fess it, but I am at a loss to ex -



ghiac - cio,      ① o - gni don - na can-giar di co - lo - re,      ② o - gni  
press it,      yet I know that it al - ways ex - cites me,      that it

don - na mi fa pal - pi - tar,      ③ o - gni don - na mi -  
thrills me a - gain and a - gain,      that it thrills me a -

fa pal - pi - tar,      ④ o - gni don - na mi fa pal - pi -  
gain and a - gain,      that it thrills me a - gain and a -

[Reflection/fixation on his  
fantasies of love + lust]

tar. gain.      Par - lo d'a-mor ve -  
Love is my in - spi -

[The fantasies do not disappear]

glian - do, ra - tion, par - lo d'a - mor so - on - ly con - sid - er -

[evidence of the insanity of his youthful lusts]

gnan - do, all' ac - qua, all' om - bra, ai mon - ti, ai fio - ri, all'er - be, ai  
a - tion. In riv - ers, woods, and flow - ers, I feel its mag - ic

pounding heart + hormones

*fp*

[Love is slipping from his fingers - He cannot grasp or understand]

fon - ti, all' e - co, all' a - ria, ai ven - ti, che il suon de' va - ni ac -  
stream - ing, a - wake, a - sleep, and dream - ing. In gen - tle winds and

*fp*

some release

*p*

[what he is experiencing]

[A bit of hopelessness]

cen - ti, — por - ta - no via con se, — por - ta - no  
show - ers, I hear its mel - low tone, — I hear its

*cresc.* *f* *colla voce* *p*

But then it all comes back in the  
blink of an eye - no rest for his  
raging body and emotions - they control him

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Via con se. Par-lo d'a-mor ve-glian-do,  
mel-low tone. Love is my con-ver-sa-tion,

par-lo d'a-mor so-gnan-do, all' ac-qua, all' om-bra,  
them with-out var-i-a-tion, I tell my love-song

[frustration combined with languishing]

ai mon-ti, ai fio-ri, all' er-be, ai fon-ti, all'  
to glens and moun-tains, to riv-ers and foun-tains, to

Something - it slips out of his fingertips -  
almost a teasing game going on

e-co, all' a-ria, ai ven-ti, che il suon de' va-ni ac-cen-ti,  
moon and stars in heav-en. The gen-tle breez-es' ech-o

*cresc.* *f* *p* *cresc.*

Despair

Disbelief

por - ta - no via con se, — por - ta - no via con  
my ev - 'ry word and tone, — my ev - 'ry word and

*f* *colla voce* *p*

Loneliness

Adagio

se, — E se non ho chi m'o - da, e  
tone — And if no one will lis - ten... and

Dejected

Perhaps the thought of a  
woman or a glimmer  
of hope

Tempo I Rising Confidence

se non ho chi m'o - da, par - lo d'a - mor con  
if no one will lis - ten, then I will talk a -

*cresc.*

Uncertainty

The hormones are talking

me, — con me, — par - lo d'a - mor con me.  
lone — of love, — talk to my - self a - lone.

*f* *p* *f*

## No.11. Voi, che sapete

You know the answer

Arietta

Cherubino

\* Courtly introduction which allows Cherubino to compose himself.  
 Andante con moto (*Susanna plays the Ritornello on the guitar.*)



stately  
+ crisp rhythms



Nervous but "performing"

Cherubino



Don - ne, ve - de - te, — s'io l'ho — nel — cor.  
La - dies, I beg — you, — share it — with — me.

Candid yet baffled by his feelings

Quel - lo ch'io pro - vo, vi — ri - di - rò, —  
This new sen - sa - tion I — un - der - go, —

acc. remains stately, but Cherubino loses some of his crisp, stately rhythms for the sake of reflecting and emoting

È per me nuo - vo ca - pir nol so. *arouses curiosity of Susanna + Countess*  
It is so dif - frent from — all I know.

Lyric + honest

intense + horny

Sen - to un af - fet - to pien di de - sir, —  
Filled with ex - cite - ment, walk - ing on air, —

pleasurable + natural

uncertain, out of control

Ch'o - raè di - let - to, ch'o - raè mar - tir. — exaggerating,  
 First I am hap - py, soon I de - spair. but to him it is  
 not exaggerating

Reacts to his body and its strange yet pleasurable feelings

Ge - lo, e poi sen - to l'al - ma av - vam - par,  
 Now I am chil - ly, next time a - flame,

small bit of frustration (perhaps because he enjoys the flames of passion more)

E in un mo - men - to — tor - no a ge - lar.  
 Not for a mo - ment am I the same.

Now returns to the ladies to plead again for answers

Ri - cer - coun be - ne fuo - ri di me,  
 I am pur - su - ing some sun - ny ray,

His body  
takes  
over

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## Helplessness

Non so chi il tie - ne, non so cos' è. So - spi-ro e  
But it e - ludes me, try as I may. I can't stop



## OUT OF CONTROL

ge - mo sen - za vo - ler, Pal - pi-toe tre - mo sen - za sa -  
sigh - ing, hard as I try, And then I trem - ble, not know - ing



Crying for help and "release" - but he loves these feelings

per. Non tro - vo pa - ce not - te, nè di, Ma pur mi pia - ce  
why. From this di - lem - ma I find no peace, And yet I want — it



He realizes how much he has revealed and returns to his canzonetta with shock and intimacy

lan - guir co - si. Voi, che sa - pe - te  
nev - er to cease. You know the an - swer,





Really seeking answers but also seeking the passion

che co - sa è a - mor, Don - ne, ve - de - te,  
you hold the - key, Love's ten - der se - cret,

6 the ladies

s'io l'ho nel cor, Don - ne, ve - de - te, —  
share it with me, La - dies, I beg — you, —

s'io l'ho nel cor, Don - ne, ve - de - te, —  
share it with me, La - dies, I beg — you, —

s'io l'ho nel cor.  
share it with me.